

vice president before being elected president. As president he oversaw the end of the Cold War and led the successful liberation of Kuwait. He is also an American hero who enlisted in the U.S. Navy after Pearl Harbor and nearly lost his life after being shot down by the Japanese.

While acknowledging former President George W. Bush's adherence to the pledge, Norquist still makes an indecorous allusion about the president, writing, "He may invade countries he cannot pronounce or find on a map, but he will not raise taxes."

Former President George W. Bush also is an honorable man who served two successful terms as governor of Texas before twice being elected president. He rallied our nation following 9/11 attacks and led sweeping efforts to secure our homeland and disrupt al Qaeda, preventing further terrorist attacks on U.S. soil during his term.

Norquist also boasts of sinking Bob Dole's 1988 presidential campaign, gloating, "Delaware governor Pete du Pont explained that all the other [Republican primary] candidates had signed the pledge and challenged Dole to do so also, offering the pledge to Dole, who visibly recoiled, as if a vampire being tossed a cross. Dole subsequently lost New Hampshire."

Former Senator Dole, too, is an honorable man who served his country as a senator and Republican presidential candidate. Dole also is an American hero who fought in World War II and suffered serious injury from Axis gunfire, leaving his arm paralyzed.

MOVING FORWARD

I believe many people were unaware of these troubling connections that I have spoken about. I was surprised when this information came to my attention. I also understand that some may not agree with what I have said in this speech.

But as William Wilberforce, the British parliamentarian and abolitionist, famously told his colleagues, "Having heard all of this, you may choose to look the other way, but you can never say again that you did not know."

I can no longer be silent. I believe the evidence is clear that Grover Norquist is connected with a number of unsavory people and groups out of the mainstream. I also believe he has exploited "the pledge" to the point of being elevated at times by the media as a spokesman for the Republican Party.

How can we ever hope to move our country forward and solve our debt problem if we are paralyzed by a pledge and threats of political retribution for breaking it by someone whose dealings in Washington over several decades have raised serious questions of impropriety? No one should be able to singularly hold Congress hostage with veto power over candidates for public office; above all someone with such troubling associations.

As former Senator Alan Simpson, who co-chaired the Bowles-Simpson deficit reduction commission, said in an August 7, 2011, interview with *Newsweek* "What can [Norquist] do to you? He's not gonna murder you. He won't burn your house. The only thing he can do is defeat you for reelection. If your reelection means more than doing something for the United States of America and getting out of this [debt] hole, then you shouldn't be in Congress."

Barbara Shelly, editorial writer for the *Kansas City Star*, wrote on July 11, 2011: "Wash-

ington, we know, is a planet unto itself. But here in the heartland, it's surreal to watch an unelected guy with a broken ethical compass bring the capital to a standstill and thwart the spirit of compromise that the majority of Americans say they want. Who elected Grover Norquist? He did, that's who. And Washington's political class has not the shame, nor the spine, to send him packing."

As I observe the hardened ideological positions gripping Washington that threaten our nation's future, my conscience has compelled me to share these concerns and provide this information for all to consider.

The American people want us to resolve this debt crisis and they have every right to expect us to follow through. Congress and the president must reach a solution that will bring confidence to the country. This place is dysfunctional and the American people see it. They want action.

I believe we must: (A) reaffirm ourselves to free America of the incredible debt burden that saddles the coming generations; and (B) break loose of not only Mr. Norquist, but any other special interest holding us hostage.

We also need to be honest with the American people and explain that we cannot just solve our nation's financial crisis by cutting waste, fraud and abuse within discretionary accounts. The real runaway spending is occurring in our out-of-control entitlement costs and the hundreds of billions in annual tax earmarks in our tax code. Until we reach an agreement that addresses these two drivers of our deficit and debt, we cannot right our fiscal ship of state.

Some are speculating that our country has gone too far to recover. I emphatically reject that notion. Americans have a spirit and sense of civic duty which was implanted in us from the beginning of this republic. It was this sense that Tocqueville most noticed. He called it the great republican virtue of America—ordinary citizens willing to do the hard work of citizenship, helping their neighbors, sacrificing for the common good, and building a better future for our kids. That's been the hallmark of America.

Have we lost this? I don't think so. We may be tempted to veer off course at times, but America is the same nation filled with the same dedicated, patriotic, God-loving, God-fearing people who carved this nation out a wilderness, and have made it an extraordinary beacon of hope and light in the world like none before it.

The problem in the country is not with the people. The problem in the country is Washington. The system is broken because we have fallen prey to ideologues that have put us in a straight jacket and threaten our futures. I believe we can and will break free because the seriousness of the times demands it.

I am one who believes America's greatest days are still ahead. All we have to do is recover that sense of virtue and duty, and be bold and brave enough to stand up and speak the truth and be true to our conscience.

AN ANNIVERSARY NOT TO CELEBRATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, this week marks an anniversary we must acknowledge, but that we certainly cannot celebrate. This Friday, we will have spent 10 years at war in Afghanistan. We will have spent a decade fighting a war that the American people no longer support. The sobering 10th anniversary is the time for reflection—reflection on how our world has changed in the last 10 years.

□ 1020

This war has consumed an unjustifiable amount of our financial treasure, led to an unprecedented burden on our servicemembers, and changed forever how an entire generation of young people views the world.

This anniversary is the time to reflect on the choices we've made and their impact on the world. Ten years later, we are still building war machines that have the potential to cause devastating harm to innocent people around the world. Ten years later, many of our Nation's best and brightest are coming home with scars, both physical and mental, that they and their families will live with forevermore.

The numbers are against us. After a decade at war, we still have 90,000 soldiers fighting in Afghanistan. More than 1,800 Americans have died. Our Nation has spent \$460 billion on an unwinnable war, and tens of thousands of innocent Afghans and Iraqis have been killed. It is well past the time for us to end this.

In remembering the last 10 years, we must think of the future. My five grandchildren are now part of a generation that has grown up without knowing what it's like to live in a country at peace. Over the past 10 years, we've led our world down a path towards war rather than fighting for peace, rather than fighting for a smarter security plan.

The American people and the global community see the error in our policy, and we are facing increasing scrutiny from our international partners. In fact, not one other government agrees with the U.S.' use of drones. In fact, our European allies have never supported the U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. Instead of heeding their calls, we are expanding the use of this deadly force, creating automatic drones that have the potential to cause unchecked devastation.

I have spoken from this spot 407 times, as you all know because you've heard me so many times, in support of SMART Security—an approach for an end to the war. And I am not alone. I've been joined by colleagues on both sides of the aisle and have been supported by Americans across the country to call for an end of our war and the return of our troops. That's exactly what my SMART Security plan is about—making military force a last resort and, instead, directing our energy and our resources toward diplomacy, democracy promotion, development

aid, and other more powerful, peaceful ways of engaging with the rest of the world.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all of my colleagues will take note of Friday's anniversary and realize that now is the time to turn the tide on our policies in Afghanistan. We need to end this war. We need to do it now. We need to promote peace through democracy. We need to promote peace through diplomacy and development. We must bring our troops home.

THE EDA ELIMINATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Speaker, since coming to Congress 9 years ago, I have sadly relearned that the government in Washington D.C. only grows and grows and grows. When Democrats and many Republicans, too, come to the floor of the House and talk about spending cuts, they are often talking simply about slowing the rate of growth of government. There is seldom, if ever, any real discussion about cutting the size of the Federal Government or about eliminating an entire program or agency. But today, with \$14.8 trillion in debt, we can't continue to simply slow the rate of growth. We've got to cut it, and we've got to get rid of some things.

As a first step this week, I will proffer a bill that will eliminate the Economic Development Agency. It's part of the Department of Commerce and was established in 1965 as an element of President Johnson's Great Society. For over 45 years, the EDA has spent billions on local projects, not national projects, trying to pick winners and losers amongst various projects by region, industry, and community. Much like a stimulus bill or earmarks, the EDA provides loans and grants to pet projects of the administration in power.

In 2008, the EDA spent \$2 million on the Harry Reid Research and Technology Park at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Just last year, it spent \$25 million on the Global Climate Mitigation Incentive Fund. This year, the agency will spend almost \$300 million of taxpayer dollars. Now, this might not sound like a lot of money sometimes here in Washington, D.C., but in Newton, in Independence, in Wichita, and in Goddard, Kansas, that's still a lot of money.

I want to take just a minute to talk about the EDA. Most folks in Congress and most folks back in Kansas will have never heard of it. I had not before I entered Congress. It provides these grants and loans to projects it selects all over the country. At its very core, the EDA is nothing more than a giant wealth redistribution machine. It takes money from people in one place and at one time and redistributes it all across the country for inherently local projects.

For example, it gave \$2 million to the "culinary amphitheater," wine tasting

room, and gift shop in Washington State. It gave \$350,000 to renovate a theater in Colorado. In 2011, it gave \$1.4 million to build infrastructure development so that a steel plant of \$1.6 billion could be built in Minnesota. Like the vast majority of projects, that steel plant would have been built without Federal taxpayer dollars. It was a \$1.6 billion project helped by the Federal Government to the tune of only \$1.4 million.

Our even bigger problem, however, is with EDA. It's duplicative. It's just one of at least 80 Federal economic development agencies. HUD and Ag and HHS all have economic development grants as well.

Second, it's ineffective. It typically provides a very small part of any given project. The GAO reports that most of its financing did not have any significant effect on the success of projects and produced, at best, inconclusive results and, in some cases, may even detract from a more flexible workforce.

Third, this is an incredibly wasteful agency. It was identified by GAO as one of the agencies that ought to go away. Indeed, a recent inspector general audit of 10 projects totaling \$45 million showed that 29 percent of the grant money had been wasted due to various violations of EDA grant requirements. Four of the 10 projects EDA funded in that group were never completed.

Finally and perhaps more importantly, this is not the role of the Federal Government. As the Cato Institute has written, the Federal Government has no business trying to direct economic activity through politicized subsidy vehicles like the EDA. We've seen that with bad outcomes, like with Solyndra, only too recently.

Every great journey starts with a single step. This is a small agency, but it's time for the first time in decades that we eliminate an entire program, an entire agency, so that it cannot continue to grow and grow and grow as part of our Federal Government. I would ask my colleagues to support the EDA Elimination Act.

POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, as one of the founding members of the congressional Out of Poverty Caucus, I rise today in my ongoing effort to sound the alarm on poverty.

As you may know, the census released data showing that 46.2 million Americans lived in poverty in 2010. The data also revealed that the poverty rate for whites was 9.9 percent in 2010. Worse, the poverty rate for African Americans was 27.4 percent. For Latinos, the poverty rate was 26.6 percent. For Asian Pacific Americans, the poverty rate was 12.1 percent.

These statistics come on the somber anniversary of the 10 years of the war

in Afghanistan, which was a blank check that should not have been written and that, of course, I could not support. In many ways, this war has significantly contributed to these staggering statistics, which we know are not just numbers but are human lives. We must create jobs. We have to create a way to maintain our social safety net.

So today I am here to ask my colleagues to join 47 Members of Congress and me in a letter to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, asking them to protect vital programs that comprise our social safety net, including but not limited to Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security, as well as the programs that provide the economic security and opportunity to millions of Americans.

□ 1030

None of us envy the work of those members on this Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, as they will have to make tough choices that affect the lives of millions of Americans.

However, we should all recognize that for the last 25 years, when we have come to deficit reduction agreements, these agreements have, for the most part, protected low-income programs. We absolutely cannot balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable, those people facing or living in poverty. This is really a moral obligation that we cannot ignore.

These programs assist the over-46 million Americans living in poverty in 2010—men, women, children, young and old alike from all backgrounds—in obtaining or maintaining their access to basic, mind you, and I am just talking about basic human needs, including food, shelter and health care. These vital safety net programs both support and create consumers, which results in increased demand and job creation. This, of course, reduces our deficit by enabling people to participate in this economy.

And not only that, many of these programs do provide pathways out of poverty and opportunities for all. More and more Americans are struggling to find work and struggling to make ends meet. And until we create jobs, and we have a way, a pathway where people clearly can be provided these opportunities, we have a real moral obligation to protect these programs. Anything short of this is really un-American.

In times like these, it's unconscionable to consider cutting programs that help those most in need like our Nation's seniors and our Nation's children. Asking the Joint Select Committee for Deficit Reduction to protect these vital human programs is, though, not enough. We have to do more. The most effective anti-poverty program is an effective jobs program.

So while I ask my colleagues to join me on the letter to the Joint Select Committee, I am also here to ask Speaker BOEHNER to move the American Jobs Act as soon as possible to